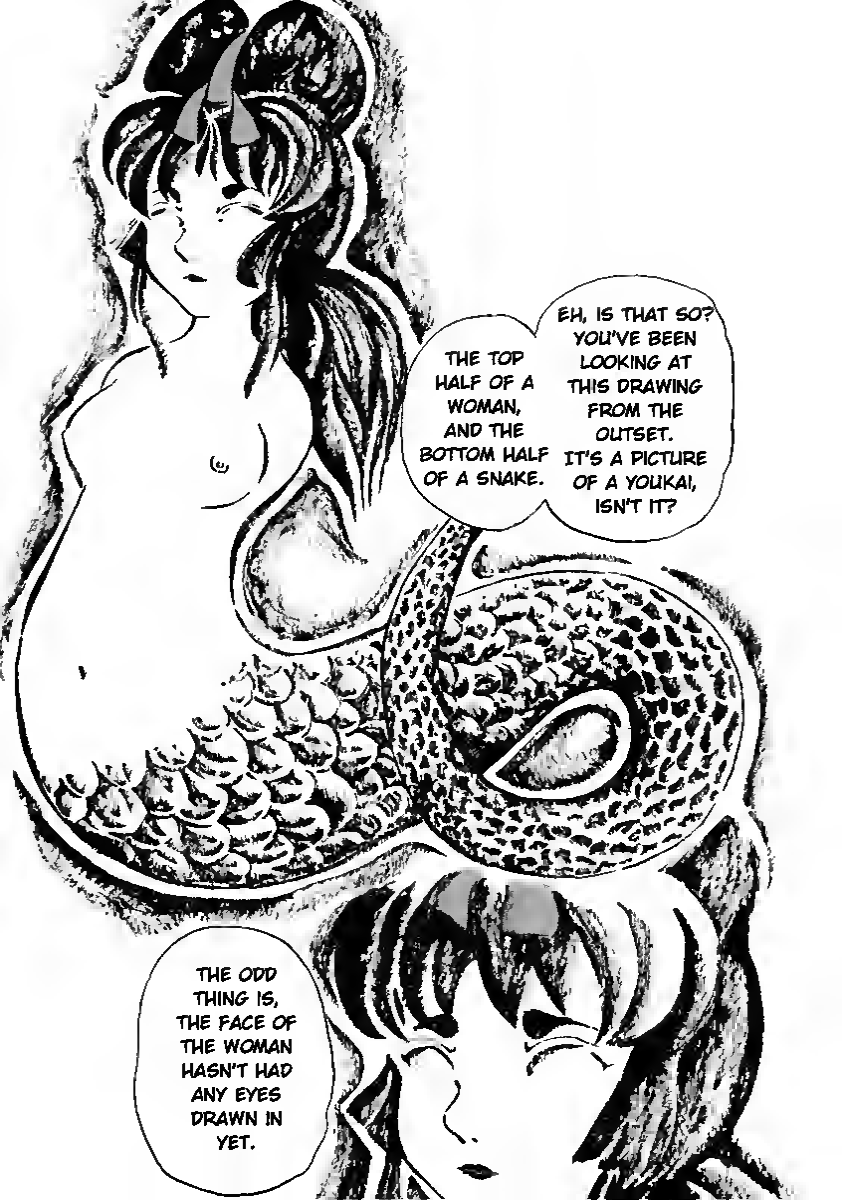
The Drawing of the Snake Woman


EH, IS THAT SO? YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING AT THIS DRAWING FROM THE OUTSET. IT'S A PICTURE OF A YOUKAI, ISN'T IT?
THE TOP HALF OF A WOMAN, AND THE BOTTOM HALF OF A SNAKE.
THE ODD THING IS, THE FACE OF THE WOMAN HASN'T HAD ANY EYES DRAWN IN YET.

"MASTER, THIS IS A REAL BARGAIN. I'LL GIVE YOU A DISCOUNT ON IT."
THE ONE WHO SOLD IT TO ME WAS A STRANGELY BEARDED CHINESE MAN, SETTING UP THE STREET'S STALLS FOR THE DAY.
"MASTER, THIS IS A MYSTERIOUS DRAWING. DRAW IN THESE WOMAN'S EYES, AND HER LIFE WILL BE IN YOUR HANDS. IT'S THE TRUTH."

I SEE. HE MEANT THE "FINISHING TOUCHES"? ...NO, THAT WASN'T EXACTLY IT.
AND SO, I DREW A BIT MYSELF.
I BEGAN TO DRAW IN THE WOMAN'S EYES.
AND WASN'T I SURPRISED!!
THE GIRL IN THE DRAWING HAD COME TO LIFE AND STARTED TO MOVE!
MHMM, I LOOKED ON AND LAUGHED, FILLED WITH JOY.
SHE WAVED HER TAIL WITH A CUTE LITTLE SHAKE.

LOOK, SHE ATE IT.
AS FOR BAIT... I DREW HER FOOD LIKE THIS.
I POURED MY LOVE INTO HER, AND TOOK CARE OF HER. SHE SOON MATURED INTO ADULTHOOD.

HMM, WELL NOW THIS GIRL IS JUST LIKE MY OWN DAUGHTER.
THE LINES OF THE GIRL'S BODY BECAME ROUND. HER BODY HAD RIPENED INTO THAT OF A WOMAN.
HUH? WHAT WAS THAT? LET YOU BORROW HER BECAUSE IT'S SO RARE? YOU WANT TO SHOW IT AROUND TO OTHERS...?
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
WHAT KIND OF FATHER WOULD LOAN THEIR OWN DAUGHTER OUT?
IT'S AS I JUST TOLD YOU. THIS IS THE SAME AS MY DAUGHTER.

IT'S TRUE I HAVE SOME LARGE DEBTS I OWE TO YOU...
HUH? NO... I MEAN, THAT IS... AS FOR THAT, THERE'S NOTHING I CAN SAY.
AHH, THERE'S NOTHING MORE I CAN DO. PLEASE HURRY AND BRING HER BACK!!
THEN PLEASE, TAKE YOUR BEST CARE OF HER! BE SURE TO FEED HER PROPERLY....
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AFTER ALL THESE MONTHS, YOU MEAN TO FINALLY THINK TO RETURN HER IN THIS CONDITION?
WA-WAIT!! WHAT IS THIS!?
HOW... HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN HER BELLY?

AH... AHH!! AN EGG IS BEING BIRTHED! Y...YOU, WHAT DID YOU (HOW DID YOU?!) DO TO THIS CHILD!?
BUT WHAT... WHAT IS GOING TO BE BORN!?
AH...AHH! THE EGG IS BREAKING OPEN. IT'S BEING BORN!